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## BOOK REVIEWS.

**ELEUSINIA.** De quelques problèmes relatifs aux Mystères d'Eleusis. Par le Comte *Goblet d'Alviella*, Professeur à l'Université de Bruxelles, Membre du Sénat et de l'Académie Royale de Belgique. Paris : Ernest Leroux. 1903. Pp., viii, 154.

Count Goblet d'Alviella, well known in the literary world as an anthropologist and historian, sketches in an interesting pamphlet of about 150 pages the significance of the Eleusinian Mysteries. He describes the initiation as it took place in the first century of our era (Chapter I.); investigates the origin of the grand mysteries (Chapt. II.); explains the eschatology of the rite, the descent to Hades, and the belief in a future life (Chapt. III.); points out the changes which the mysteries of Orphism, the belief in the Dionysus Zagreus and the philosophy of time made upon the traditional festival of Demeter and Kore (Chapt. IV.); and finally the survival of the Mysteries, albeit in a changed form, in Gnosticism and Christianity.

Alviella distinguishes seven epochs in the history of Eleusinian Mysteries :

(1) The prehistoric times when families of the village Eleusis, devotees of the goddess Demeter and her daughter, Kore, practised magical rites for the sake of invoking the divine blessing upon their crops.

(2) After the annexation of Eleusis to Athens, outsiders were admitted to the ceremony. Their initiation was assumed to renew the life of the neophyte, and comprised a descent to the other world. In this stage the mystic drama forms an important part of the traditional rites.

(3) In the eighth century before our era, the main aim of the ceremony is sought in the regeneration of the initiated persons, and the main use of the Mysteries is expected to be attained in their beneficent influence upon man's life after death.

(4) The next period is characterised by a development of the ceremonial which is now divided into the greater and smaller mysteries.

(5) A new epoch beginning with the fifth century B. C. witnesses the addition of the Epopty, the sacred vision, a rite which is superimposed upon the traditional ceremonies, embodying a deeper conception of the soul, such as was taught by the priests of Orpheus, containing a cosmogonic system and ethical doctrines. Henceforth Dionysus plays a most prominent part in the Mysteries.

(6) A general syncretism characterises the sixth period in which the light of paganism flickers up for the last time, finally meeting its doom.

(7) The last period witnesses the rise of Christianity. Certain forms of the mysteries are transmitted to the new faith, and thus some of the Eleusinian ceremonies are perpetuated in the rituals of the victorious Church.

P. C.

THE STUDY OF RELIGION. By *Morris Jastrow, Jun., Ph. D.*, Professor in the University of Pennsylvania. London: The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1902. Pages, xi, 451.

Morris Jastrow, Professor in the University of Pennsylvania, well known through his works on Assyriology and the religion of the Assyrians, presents the public with a stately volume of 451 pages on *The Study of Religion*, in which he employs throughout the historical method, beginning with a delineation of the history of the study of religion itself. He shows in the first chapter how utterly lacking the ancients were in their appreciation of the religion of others; for instance, Tacitus cannot learn anything from the religion of the Germans who to him are barbarians, and Lucretius sees the sublime monotheism of the Jews merely in the light of a superstition. The introduction of Christianity changed the situation by replacing the standpoint of indifference for one of onesidedness. One religion was regarded as absolute truth, all the others as mere idolatries, and here we have "the glaring inconsistency of a religion preaching love, and everlasting brandishing the sword." Even a man like Voltaire saw in Mohammed merely "a deceiver and a monster of cruelty," and to Luther, the Pope and the Turk in their position represented Antichrist. Spinoza was the first to appreciate the historical development of religion. In his *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* he makes an attempt to show how "certain leading principles....passing on from age to age, are modified and elaborated until they reach their culmination in Christianity." Spinoza, however, knows nothing as yet of other religions, and has as yet to hear of Buddhism and Zoroastrianism, and thus the historical attitude is still lacking in the comparative method. Broader tendencies were introduced by Alexander Ross, who published his work on *The Religions of the World*, in 1653, and by Picart and Bernard, whose illustrated work on the *Ceremonies and Religious Customs of the World* tried to be fair toward non-Christians. Bernard shows "a marked desire to be accurate in the information he furnishes, and has recourse to the best sources at his disposal." The progress is now rapid, and we may mention next in order Herder in his *Ideas for a Philosophy of the History of Mankind*. He sees in the religious development a great "movement forward and upwards....the golden chain of culture." "Since I have come to recognise thee, Oh golden chain of culture," he exclaims in a noble, albeit sentimental outburst, "that encircles the world, and reachest out through all individuals to the throne of Providence....history has ceased to be to me a horrible spectre of devastation on holy ground." Herder is an exponent of his time. His contemporary, Lessing, whose "Nathan